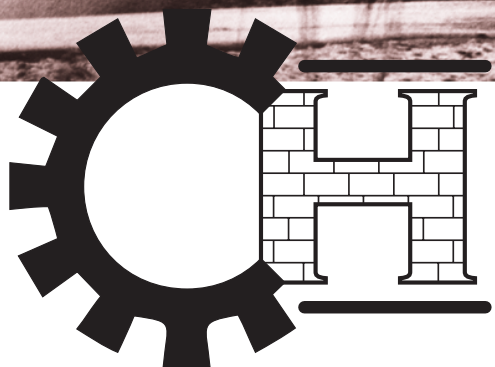


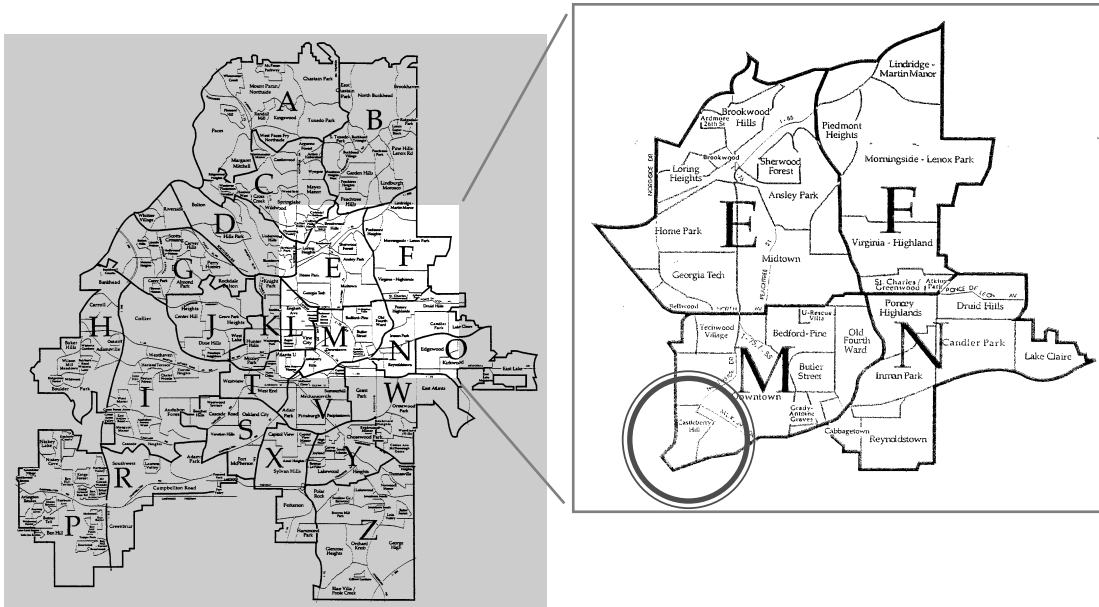
CASTLEBERRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD



MASTER PLAN

FINAL DOCUMENT – JUNE 2000

Located on the southwestern edge of Downtown Atlanta and south of the Philips Arena, Georgia Dome and Georgia World Congress Center, Castleberry Hill is one of about 230 neighborhoods defined by the City of Atlanta. These neighborhoods are organized into 24 Neighborhood Planning Units (NPUs) which reflect the City's policy of community-level planning, of which the Castleberry Hill Master Plan is an example. The Castleberry Hill Master Plan is a project administered by the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning and funded by a grant from the Atlanta Empowerment Zone Corporation and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is a collaborative effort between the Castleberry Hill Neighborhood Association and David Butler & Associates, Inc.



This plan is presented according to the three work phases:

1) **INVENTORY AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION:**

The existing conditions within the neighborhood are studied and documented.

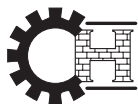
2) **DEVELOPMENT PLAN:**

In public meetings, neighborhood goals are established. Plans and conceptual drawings are produced based on the determined objectives.

3) **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Projects are prioritized and sources of funding identified. A mechanism for monitoring progress is established.

Castleberry Hill is a unique urban community with a strong historic identity. Many of the early 20th-century warehouse buildings forming continuous frontages along the streets have been converted to lofts and are now the predominate housing type. There



is a recent, culturally diverse population which is young and single or married without children, although a handful of older residents have decided to test the urban environment as well. The few children play on the sidewalks or empty parking lots. Some residents have called Castleberry Hill their home for decades. All want their community to be a better place to live and work. While there are numerous commercial establishments, they are mainly wholesale and light manufacturing operations from the early days or strip developments aligning the arteries that frame Castleberry Hill – not neighborhood oriented. Those who live here have expressed a strong desire for useable, green, open space. This study finds that, despite the recent influx of residents, Castleberry Hill continues to have deterioration in existing buildings and sites, a deficient street layout, patterns of vacant land, and environmental conditions detrimental to public health, safety and welfare.



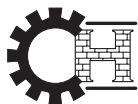
Castleberry Hill lies within the boundaries of Downtown Atlanta as defined in the Central Atlanta Action Plan (CA²P). The Downtown boundaries are roughly North Avenue, Northside Drive, I-20, and Boulevard. Downtown and Midtown are the geographic and economic hub of metro Atlanta as well as the Southeast, two of the nation's fastest growing areas in population and jobs.

Clearly, Castleberry Hill can benefit from its association with Downtown and the goals of CA²P, which include capturing a share of metropolitan Atlanta's economic boom and creating a local critical mass of workers and residents to expand and attract amenities and services presently in shortage.

The north edge of Castleberry Hill is marked by the arrival of the Techwood and MLK Drive viaducts. The many vacant parcels to the northeast are used primarily for parking for the Georgia Dome, Georgia World Congress Center, and Russell Federal Building. Three of the neighborhood's five viaducts crossing the railroad bed occur in the northeast: MLK Drive, Mitchell Street and Nelson Street (which is presently closed). The other two viaducts are Peters Street and McDaniel Street. Friendship Baptist Church anchors the northwest corner, with a strip retail and the garden-style apartment complex Northside Plaza to its immediate south.

The western and eastern arteries that frame Castleberry Hill are characterized by commercial strip developments. Both Northside Drive and Whitehall Street include wholesale/retail uses, while Whitehall, because of the I-1 zoning, includes some manufacturing uses and, incidentally, a vineyard adjacent to Atlanta Wholesale Wine.

One of the more notable characteristics of Castleberry Hill is its 40-acre federally recognized Historic District, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, which is described as containing the largest and best concentrated remnant of railroad buildings in Atlanta. These buildings were historically used for retailing, wholesaling, and light industry. The railway, which defines street and building patterns as it cuts through Castleberry, is as old as Atlanta itself. Early 20th-century commercial and



industrial structures form continuous frontages at the street and railway lines, giving the area a distinctive urban look. Peters Street, the traditional route from Downtown to West End, cuts through the district.

The broad open floors of the buildings in this area have recently become the sites of residential loft conversions as the area, like much of downtown and midtown Atlanta, has gained attention due to the recent popularity of in-town living. The Deere Building (49 units) and the GE Building (48 units), redeveloped in 1996, led



Castleberry Square as seen from Peters Street (above) and Mangum Street (at left).

the recent sudden market for loft housing in Atlanta. Castleberry Square, however, was developed in 1983 and is generally recognized as Atlanta's first loft project. It is common to see artists, photographers, writers, metal smiths, and other crafts-

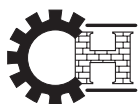
persons living and working in the old warehouse-style buildings. Residents present in 1990 said the US Census conducted in that year passed over loft housing in the area, and, while Census 2000 takers also had a difficult time determining which buildings were used as residences, they were assisted by the planning team to ensure an accurate representation of the neighborhood. In addition to residential uses the Historic District includes some commercial uses such as wholesale/retail operations, machinists, metal fabricators, and barber shops.



Renovated buildings along Peters Street.

Despite the rise in residential occupancy and the presence of uninterrupted building frontages, the Historic District contains a surprising amount of vacant land. Of a parcel database totaling 24 acres, 29% (7 acres) were surveyed vacant in the summer of 1999. A large contributor to the vacant acreage is the Norfolk Southern parcel on Peters Street, which was offered for sale during the planning process.

There is a preponderance of vacant land outside of the Register District as well – 30.5 parcel acres out of 114, or 27%, were surveyed vacant. Many relatively smaller vacant properties are to the west of Walker Street. The majority of tax delinquent parcels, blight and overgrown vacant lots occur in this area. Even so, this area is home to prominent businesses such as H.J. Russell & Company and the majority of churches in



Castleberry Hill as well as the few remaining single-family detached structures from the early 1900s. McDaniel Street is lined with small, independently owned retail establishments that originally served John Hope Homes and now serve its replacement, the Village at Castleberry Hill, an Atlanta Housing Authority mixed-income project.

Another notable characteristic of Castleberry Hill is that part of Atlanta's Empowerment



Few single-family detached homes remain.



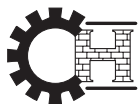
Friendship Baptist Church on Mitchell Street and the Hills Avenue Baptist Church.



Zone

enters the neighborhood in two places: south of Fair Street to McDaniel Street, and north of Mitchell Street to MLK. The Empowerment Zone eligibility criteria indicate that portions of Castleberry Hill suffer from pervasive poverty, unemployment, and high vacancy rates.

Empowerment Zone legislation provides for grants and tax incentives for certain types of projects in the zone, including the development of this Master Plan.



VISION STATEMENT**0.02.01**

Castleberry Hill is a historic downtown neighborhood, unique in Atlanta. Its future is informed by its colorful past: markets, shops, restaurants and residences enjoyed by diverse peoples. In this urban oasis situated amidst business, government, transportation, sports, entertainment, and convention facilities, old buildings are given new life. The community takes pride in its streetscapes, green spaces, public art, and historic structures.

See SECTION 2.01.

GOALS**0.02.02**

After developing the vision statement, the neighborhood focused on priority issues and developed the following list of goals:

- To promote and preserve economic development and a variety of housing opportunities, and to encourage an economically and culturally diverse population in Castleberry Hill.
- To attract and support quality services and retail in the neighborhood.
- To reduce crime, drug use and loitering, and maintain an environment in which neighbors and visitors feel safe and secure.
- To preserve historic buildings and sites and develop new ones which compliment the old.
- To develop parks, open spaces and convenient pedestrian circulation.
- To provide adequate parking for present and future residents and commercial uses.
- To facilitate safe and convenient circulation of pedestrian, non-motorized and vehicular traffic and to minimize conflicts between these various modes of transportation.

See SECTION 2.02.

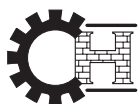
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**0.02.03**

The Castleberry Hill development plan consists of well-defined programs and projects intended to fulfill the neighborhood's objectives, including the formation of a community development corporation (CDC), the preservation of the Historic District through design guidelines and zoning, the establishment of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, promoting neighborhood-oriented retail and employment opportunities, addressing a variety of transportation and parking concerns, reinstating a regular neighborhood clean-up program, reducing crime and improving safety through neighborhood watch and resident-business partnerships, and the construction of a park, greenway and community center.

See SECTION 2.03.

URBAN DESIGN PLAN**0.02.04**

The ideas of this Master Plan were developed over many months of neighborhood discus-



sion and collection of data, and the urban design plan was produced to record these ideas in one graphic document, FIGURE 0.02.04. It is not a construction document or a mandate to develop in a narrowly construed fashion; rather, it is an exploration of what the neighborhood might become if development followed the ideas generated by the Master Plan process.

To that end, the urban design plan illustrates both projects of the development plan as well as conjectural in-fill projects which assume development of certain parcels according to neighborhood objectives of better connecting buildings to the public life of the street, providing more greenery and trees (especially along streets), locating parking to the rear of buildings, restoring surface street continuity, promoting pedestrian convenience, and encouraging neighborhood-oriented retail and restaurants.

It is important to note that this plan is not an end, but rather a beginning. It should be monitored and updated with the consensus of the neighborhood.

PRIORITIZATION OF PROJECTS

0.02.05

The Master Plan establishes criteria for setting priorities and identifies actions which should be undertaken during different time frames. During the next 18 months, high priority projects include establishing guidelines for urban design and historic preservation, the formation of a community development corporation to receive grants and other funding for projects such as the Castleberry Hill Park and the Peters Street retail area, and implementing programs to eliminate visual unsightliness.

In the short term, 2002 to 2006, the focus turns to the acquisition of land for the Park, Greenway Trail, a community center and community parking lot; streetscapes in the Peters Street retail area and the railroad spur south of Haynes Street; and transportation projects including the replacement of bridges and viaducts, and studies of Northside Drive and Techwood Extension alternatives.

Long-term concerns for Castleberry Hill are transportation projects related to West Side development and a community parking lot.

See SECTION 3.01.

FUNDING, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & FOLLOW-UP

0.02.06

Because the neighborhood intends to carry out the projects identified in the Master Plan, sources of funding and a means of implementing the projects has been determined. Implementors are described in the Development Plan, SECTION 2.03. Funding sources are listed in SECTION 3.02. The Action Matrix, FIGURE 0.02.06, brings together costs, funding sources, responsible agencies and a timeline for these projects in one document.

A major participant in the implementation will be the Castleberry Hill Development Corporation, which has already been formed as a Georgia non-profit corporation and is currently applying for federal 501(c)3 non-profit status. This entity will have the time and resources to implement projects and monitor and update the Master Plan.

See SECTIONS 3.02 and 3.03.

